Information Management System for Mine Action in Sudan

Mohammad Kabir

United Nations Mine Action Programme in Sudan

Follow this and additional works at: https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cisr-journal

Part of the Defense and Security Studies Commons, Emergency and Disaster Management Commons, Other Public Affairs, Public Policy and Public Administration Commons, and the Peace and Conflict Studies Commons

Recommended Citation

Available at: https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cisr-journal/vol10/iss2/40

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Center for International Stabilization and Recovery at JMU Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Conventional Weapons Destruction by an authorized editor of JMU Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact dc_admin@jmu.edu.
The Information Management System for Mine Action in Sudan

Mohammad Kabir

Kabir: Information Management System for Mine Action in Sudan

Information Management System for Mine Action in Sudan

by Mohammad Kabir [United Nations Mine Action Programme in Sudan]

GICHID | CIDHG

IMMSA

The Information Management System for Mine Action is a globally used and internationally accepted database and software system that allows mine-action programmes to efficiently collect, store, and retrieve data and information. IMMSA provides powerful tools to rapidly disseminate information on hazardous areas and other important aspects of mine action by providing digital as well as printed maps and reports.

All U.N. mine-action offices and Operations and Quality Assurance Officers in Sudan are equipped with an IMMSA system capable of receiving, analysing, and displaying many types of data ranging from minefield locations, clearance operations, and mine-risk education activities to agricultural development plans and movements of intentionally displaced persons. Following the successful establishment of an IMMSA facility at the United Nations Mine Action Office in Khartoum in April 2002, the Northern Regional Mine Action Office in Kajlabi in August 2002 and the Southern Regional Mine Action Office in Juba in March 2003, a substantial amount of data concerning suspected and actual mined areas, mined roads and landmine victims was collected and entered. A large amount of information on ordnance disposal sites, unexploded ordinance locations, ammunition dumps and the opening of squares of the time has been collected and recorded during the last two years of operations. The submission, transcription and analysis of the information demonstrate how the landmine threat in Sudan has a significant and negative impact on people and actions by restricting the access routes of the U.N. Mission in Sudan and also access of humanitarians and internally displaced populations.

Mine action operations in Sudan have been enhanced with the potential of adding support tools to IMMSA. Support tools for capturing data on road assessments, road clearance, and monitoring, mine-risk education, and mine risk education activities, planning and other management issues.

All mine-action offices in Sudan can produce IMMSA output, such as maps, graphic presentations and data for planning, to educate people about the impact of landmines/UXO and to reduce the risk, presenting data and statistics.

The information-management section is working closely with United Nations Mission in Sudan, the World Food Programme, the International Organization for Migration, the U.N. Joint Logistics Centre and the U.N. Commission on Human Rights to develop a common system (not IMMSA, but compatible with it) that can facilitate integrated planning for humanitarian interventions in Sudan. In particular, this system could assist with tracking internally displaced persons/refugees and anticipating their movements and proximity to known/suspected mined or dangerous areas.

Mine Action Support Group Update

This article contains excerpts from the United Nations’ third quarterly newsletter, which highlights the activities of the Mine Action Support Group from July to September 2006, including updates from the United Nations Mine Action Service, the United Nations Development Programme and UNICEF.

The Mine Action Support Group meets four times a year to facilitate discussion between donors and the U.N. mine-action partners. The MSG has 27 members and invites representatives from mine-affected countries, experts and nongovernmental organizations to share information about mine action in their countries. The group’s goal is to simplify donor coordination and ease funding. The United States chaired the group in 2006 and will continue to do so in 2007.

Developments in UNMAS Programs

Afghanistan. Over the summer, an excess of 6.5 million square meters (1,606 acres) of minefields and 29 million square meters (7,166 acres) of former battlefields were cleared, while 74 million square meters (1,829 acres) of minefields and 395 million square meters (976 acres) of former battlefields were verified. The total area cleared for performance since 1989 to 420 million square meters (103,784 acres) of minefields and 630 million square meters (157,476 acres) of former battlefields surveyed, and 369 million square meters (91,181 acres) of minefields and 753 million square meters (186,070 acres) of former battlefields cleared. Under the supervision of 22 quality management teams directed by the United Nations Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan, 125 manual-clearance teams, 44 mechanical teams, 33 mine-dog groups, 76 risk assessment teams and 60 explosive-ordnance-disposal teams implemented this work. Ninety mine-risk education teams operate nationally including community- and clinic-based programmes, mobile cinemas and encashment centers, and from January to September 2006 the teams reached over 720,000 people in direct campaigns. As of September 30, 2006, there were over 360 persons injured and 60 killed according to statistics, but such incidents are considered to be under-reported.

Security is a problem in the country, with operations in the south and east curtailed both by security incidents and Afghan and international military force operations. Mine-action teams and personnel have suffered a number of direct attacks, including hijackings, thefts and kidnappings. UNMCA continues to monitor the security situation and adjust operations to ensure worker safety and personnel assets.

Funding for the program is stable, with confirmed resources for humanitarian mine action identified only through the end of 2006, and a remaining shortfall of US$7.5 million before full support of the existing capacity can be achieved. Additional funding for 2007 will be critical to enable continued operations and assist in the transition to full government responsibility, which has been hampered recently by changes in government personnel.

Lebanon—Rapid Response. The 34 days of hostilities between Israel and armed elements based in Lebanon resulted in extensive unexploded-ordnance contamination in southern Lebanon, mainly in the form of unexploded cluster bombs and submunitions, with more limited contamination in other parts of the country. The U.N. Mine Action Centre hosted the Inter-agency Rapid Response Plan to support Lebanon authorities (namely the National Demining Office) in addressing clearance and mine risk education needs, supporting humanitarian agencies and deploying an expanded United Nations Inter-agency Mine Action Programme. A Mine Action Planning Group, including U.N. agencies and implementing partners, was formed and convened meetings on July 27 and August 9. In addition to holding a donor meeting at UNMAS on August 10, the Mine Action Team utilized the Mine Action Support Group network to issue letters updating donors on the scope of the problem, the operational response and funding requirements.

The National Demining Office, working in Beirut with UNDP Technical Advisor and an UNMAS Coordinator and in coordination with the UNMAS-managed Mine Action Centre, South Lebanon, planned and executed the response. The National Mine Risk Education Steering Committee, with support from UNICEF, launched a mass-media awareness campaign for refugees in Syria and for people throughout Lebanon.

While the total amount of UXO in southern Lebanon is unknown, as of October 10, 2006, 770 individual cluster-bomb–strike sites have been identified. Reported casualties total 126, with 18 killed and 108 injured. As of September 30, 2006, 170 cluster-bomb–strike sites have been cleared.

Updates from the United Nations Mine Action Service, the United Nations Development Programme and UNICEF!